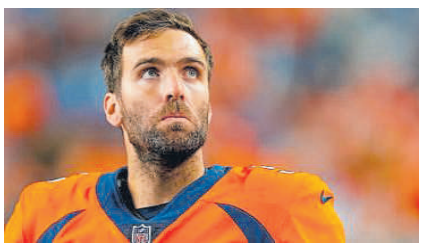
LIFE & CULTURE

INDIE PERFORMERS, VENUE STAFFS SEE LIVELIHOODS HURT

»1C



SPORTS

INJURED QB JOE FLACCO RELEASED BY BRONCOS »8A

Voice of the Rocky Mountain Empire

THE DENVER POST

FRIDAY, MARCH 20, 2020 COLD; LIGHT SNOW POSSIBLE ▲33° ▼20° »20A • © THE DENVER POST • $2 PRICE MAY VARY OUTSIDE METRO DENVER ★

CORONAVIRUS

With two more fatalities, death toll rises to four; 61 new cases announced. » 4A

Coloradans in quarantine or on cruise ships just want to come home. » 5A

State health officials stop short of urging residents to shelter in place. » 6A

Elective procedures halted

Empty shelves not "supply issue"

Forklift operator Don Roland moves a pallet of pasta out of a truck at Load to Ride on Wednesday in Denver. The pasta will go to King Soopers. Typically, Load to Ride transports hard goods such as granite countertops, but now the transportation company is helping to move food to area grocery stores. *Helen H. Richardson, The Denver Post*

Food chain is strong, experts say; blame panicked consumers

By Judith Kohler
The Denver Post

The aisles of empty shelves in Denver-area grocery stores and supermarkets might signal otherwise, but Richard Mizell, whose company helps fill those shelves, is adamant that the food supply chain is in good shape.

"It's not a supply issue. It's not that we're running out of anything," said Mizell, safety director for Load To Ride Transportation Inc. in Denver. "Right now we're catching up."

Catching up has meant changing up some of what the company's 100 trucks haul across the country as stores work to restock toilet paper, paper towels and food that people have been grabbing up as quickly as it appears. Colorado stores have shortened the hours they're open to the public to replenish.

The runs on paper products and whole cases of meat and other goods have accelerated as coronavirus cases have spread, as restaurants have cut service or closed and more people hole up at home.

Load to Ride doesn't usually ship a lot of food or toiletries, but last weekend it had three trailers full of toilet paper.

"That was very abnormal for us, but right now the supply chains are so overloaded, trying to get the product in, that, instead of using their normal carriers, people are just pretty much putting ev-

SUPPLIES » 6A

Polis adds hair salons, extends restaurant closure to April 30

By Alex Burness
The Denver Post

In response to the coronavirus outbreak, Gov. Jared Polis has ordered the suspension of all "nonessential" surgeries and medical procedures in Colorado to free up equipment, including ventilators and personal protection items for health care workers.

An executive order he signed Thursday requires this suspension to run from March 23 to April 14 for all facilities other than rural and critical-access hospitals, for which the order's timeline is indefinite.

"This includes all voluntary or elective surgeries or procedures, whether medical, dental, or veterinary," a news release from the governor's office stated.

Polis said in a statement: "As a state, we are looking at all possible solutions to ensure we are protecting the health and safety of Coloradans and minimizing the duration of the crisis. This is a coordinated effort with all state agencies and community partners to utilize every resource available during this difficult time to reduce the severity and duration of the crisis. Together, we will get through this."

Polis has also ordered the closure of additional businesses deemed "nonessential." Nail salons, hair salons, spas, massage parlors and tattoo shops must close until at least April 30, per his order.

That order was updated Thursday but originally published Monday. The initial version of it called for a 30-day closure of restaurants — delivery and takeout excepted — plus bars, theaters, gymnasiums and casinos. The new expiration date of April 30 now applies to those facilities, too.

Polis told reporters on Wednesday that as the closure of these

POLIS » 4A

California governor orders statewide stay-at-home order

By Kathleen Ronayne
The Associated Press

SACRAMENTO, CALIF. » Gov. Gavin Newsom on Thursday ordered the state's 40 million residents to stay at home, restricting nonessential movements to control the spread of the coronavirus that threatens to overwhelm the state's medical system.

"This is a moment we need to make tough decisions," Newsom said. "We need to recognize reality."

His move came after counties and communities covering about half the state's population had issued similar orders.

People may still leave their homes for walks and exercise and for essential needs such as food and medical care. Restaurant meals can still be delivered to homes.

Newsom earlier in the day asked President Donald Trump to deploy a Navy medical ship to help the state expand its medical capacity and warned that more than half of California's residents could contract the new coronavirus.

Newsom asked Trump to send the USNS Mercy Hospital Ship to the port of Los Angeles for use through Sept. 1, in a letter dated Wednesday. California has disproportionately aided people returning to the U.S. from foreign countries and needs the ship to help "decompress" its health care delivery system as infection rates climb, Newsom wrote. The ship is based in San Diego.

He said infection rates are doubling every four days in some parts of the state and issued the dire prediction that 56% of Cali-

OUTBREAK » 6A

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